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the esprit orchestra

8:00 p.m.
Monday, June 15, 1998
Eckhardt-Gramatté Hall
The Rozsa Centre

CALGARY

Acknowledgments

Esprit Orchestra gratefully acknowledges the following for their generous support of Esprit's tour to Western Canada

The Canada Council for the Arts

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With special thanks to:

Catherine MacDonald
Mount Royal College Department of Theatre and Speech
William Aberhart High School
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Brent Van Dusen,
Jeff Hiley

New Works Calgary
presents:
The Esprit Orchestra
Western Canada Tour '98

Alex Pauk, Music Director and Conductor

Eckhardt-Gramatté Hall
Rozsa Centre, University of Calgary

Monday June 15, 1998
8:00 p.m.

PROGRAMME

José Evangelista *Symphonie minute*
(Canada) 1994

Alexina Louie *The night is shattered and the blue*
 stars shiver in the distance
(Canada) 1997

INTERMISSION

John Rea *Zefiro torna*
(Canada) 1994

- i. Envol
- ii. Mélopée
- iii. Combat
- iv. Presto chromatique

Colin McPhee *Nocturne*
(Canada) 1958

PROFILES

José Evangelista composer

José Evangelista pursues an artistic path by which he explores ways of making a music based exclusively on melody. Hence he has developed a heterophonic writing, both for instruments and orchestra, in which the melodic line generates echoes of itself and creates an illusion of polyphony. His music draws roots from an enlarged vision of tradition: To his Spanish origins he has added the influence of the Indonesian gamelan, the Western avant-garde and modal music.

Evangelista was born in Valencia, Spain in 1943. He began his musical studies with Vicente Asencio while also studying physics. Later work in computer science led him to Canada. Settling in Montreal in 1970, Evangelista studied composition with André Prévost and Bruce Mather. He also spent time studying music in Java, Bali, Indonesia and Burma. In 1986, he was composer-in-residence at the Akademi Musik Indonesia in Yogyakarta.

Since 1979, Evangelista has taught at the University of Montreal where, in 1987, he formed the Balinese Gamelan Workshop. He has been a founding member of several concert societies, has received many awards and numerous commissions from, among others, Itinéraire (Paris), the Kronos Quartet, the Groupe vocal de France, Esprit Orchestra, the SMCQ and CBC Radio. His works have been performed in Canada, the United States, Asia and Europe by groups such as Ensemble Modern (Frankfurt), the Nieuw Ensemble (Amsterdam), Music Projects (London), the Orchestre philharmonique de Radio-France, the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, and New Music Concerts (Toronto). Between 1993 and 1995, Mr. Evangelista was composer-in-residence with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra.

Alexina Louie composer

Alexina Louie has been widely commissioned and performed by Canada's leading orchestras, new music ensembles, chamber groups and soloists. Her music emphasizes craft and imagination stemming from a wide variety of influences -- from her Chinese heritage to her theoretical, historical and performance studies. Through an on-going investigation of scores, recordings, literature, poetry and visual arts combined with introspection and continuous composition, Alexina Louie has developed a uniquely personal style rooted in a bend of East and West.

Notable performances include the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra's performance of *The Ringing Earth* for the gala opening of Expo 86; the Montreal Symphony Orchestra's performance of the same work in the United Nations General Assembly on United Nations Day (1989); the Toronto Symphony Orchestra tours of Europe (1986) and the Pacific Rim (1990); and pianist Jon Kimura Parker's performance of *Scenes From a Jade Terrace*, on the programme for the official gala opening of the Canadian Embassy in Tokyo (1991). 1993 marked the world premiere of *Gallery Fanfares, Arias and Interludes*, a one-hour work commissioned by the Art gallery of Ontario for the opening ceremonies of their new gallery spaces. That year also featured the world premiere of *Glance*, commissioned by the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra and *Arc*, a violin concerto for Corey Cerovsek. Also in 1993, Louie's *O Magnum Mysterium: In Memoriam Glenn Gould* was performed by the BBC Symphony. It was performed again in 1994 by the St. Louis Symphony, Leonard Slatkin conducting, and in 1997 by the Montreal Symphony. *Touch*, Louie's 1996 work for solo piano, was premiered at Calgary's Esther Honens International Piano Competition and Festival.

In 1992, Louie was awarded the SOCAN Award for being the most frequently-performed Canadian composer, the second time she received the award since it was established in 1990. In 1994, she was awarded the Chalmer's Award for the vocal movements of *Gallery Fanfares, Arias and Interludes*. Louie has served as composer-in-residence at several music festivals including the 1993 Scotia Festival, the 1994 Vancouver Chamber Music Festival and the 1996 Brott Summer Music Festival. Among the highly-regarded conductors who have performed Louie's music are Leonard Slatkin, Andrew Davis, Charles Dutoit, Mario Bernardi, Keith Lockhart, Kazuyoshi Akiyama, Gunther Herbig and Bramwell Tovey.

Alexina Louie is currently composer-in-residence at the Canadian Opera Company, for which she is developing a mainstage, full-length opera with Tony Award-winning playwright David Henry (M. Butterfly). Their erotic ghost story, based on a seventeenth century kabuki play, will be premiered in the Fall of 2000.

In 1997, Alexina Louie was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Calgary.

John Rea composer

In addition to being one of Canada's most distinguished composers, John Rea is an active teacher, writer and concert producer. The recipient of many awards and commissions, Rea has written music in several genres:

solo, chamber, music-theatre, orchestra, ballet, choral, opera and electronic music. His music has been heard widely throughout Canada, the United States and Europe.

Some of Mr. Rea's recent premieres have included *Alma & Oskar*, premiered by Esprit Orchestra with world-renowned Canadian tenor Richard Margison in 1996; a 1995 re-orchestration, for twenty one players, of Alban Bergs opera *Wozzeck*, performed in Montreal and Banff by the *Nouvel Ensemble Moderne*; *Einer nach dem Andern!*, for the chamber orchestra *Ensemble Musique Nouvelle* of Liège (Belgium, 1994); *Débâcle* (also for the NEM), a 1993 Radio-Canada television film production about five composers – *La suite montréalaise*; *Canto di beatrice*, for two sopranos and two cellos, after a text by Dante (Italy, 1992); a melodrama, *Une Fleur du mal*, for Canadian soprano Marie-Danielle Parent with clarinet, cello and percussion, after texts by Poe, Baudelaire and Sappho (Montreal, 1992); and a string quartet, *Objets Perdus*, for the Arditti Quartet (Toronto, 1992).

John Rea lectures and publishes widely on the subject of twentieth-century music. Since 1973, he has taught composition and music theory at McGill University, where from 1986 to 1991 he was Dean of the Faculty of Music. Rea was a founding member of the Montreal new music society *Les Événements du Neuf* (1978 to 1990) and has been a member of the Board of Directors and the Artistic Committee of the *Société de Musique Contemporaine de Québec (SMCQ)* since 1982.

In both 1981 and 1992, Rea was awarded the prestigious Governor-General's prize (*Prix Jules-Léger*) for new chamber music.

Colin McPhee
composer

Colin McPhee was born in Montreal in 1900 and moved to Toronto with his family in 1913. In Toronto he studied piano and composition with Ernest Farmer and within a very short period of time attracted a great deal of attention within the music community for his talents. In 1918 he moved to Baltimore to study at the Peabody Conservatory with Gustav Strube (composition) and Harold Randolph (piano). McPhee's talent for composition particularly emerged during that time, but after returning to Toronto in 1921, he concentrated on his piano studies, receiving significant acclaim for his artistry as a performer as well.

In 1924, McPhee moved to Paris to study, compose and perform. In 1926 he settled in New York, quickly becoming involved with the many societies newly established for contemporary composers in the United

States—including the League of Composers and the International Composers' Guild. McPhee only became an American citizen after 1940, but from the time he moved to the U.S., critics and other writers claimed him as among the best American composers. (In 1933, McPhee was listed among American composers "who have developed indigenous materials or are specially interested in expressing some phase of the American spirit in their work.")

Among McPhee's earliest successes were the 1928 Concerto for Piano and Wind Octette, the 1929 Sea Shanty Suite for baritone solo, male chorus, two pianos and timpani, and music he composed for experimental films by Ralph Steiner.

In the later 1920s, McPhee heard recordings of percussion orchestras from Java and Bali—gamelan. He was fascinated with the subtle interplay of rhythm and sonorities of the gongs, gong-chimes, metallophones, drums and cymbals, and in 1931 set out to explore the music further in Bali, along with his wife anthropologist Jane Belo. The two returned to Paris briefly in 1932, but McPhee became disenchanted with Western life and Western music and returned to Bali that same year. While there, McPhee devoted himself entirely to Balinese culture, tradition and music. He worked closely with local musicians, learning to play the various instruments of the gamelan and forming a gamelan club in his own village. But McPhee did not lose touch with the United States. He visited New York in 1935 to 1936, bringing Bali with him through his music and the films he had made in his new home.

After his permanent return to the United States in 1939, McPhee continued composing, lecturing and writing, often with fellowships from the prestigious Guggenheim and Bollingen Foundations. But McPhee received little recognition for his work while still alive. Having had only sporadic success with his compositions, McPhee suffered long periods of depression and tremendous financial difficulties. Prior to his death in 1964, McPhee had been teaching at UCLA – a position that granted him at least some relief from his financial stresses. He died believing his Balinese-influenced music of the early 1930s had been a failure. It was only after his death that his book *Music in Bali* was published, and only within the past two decades has the full impact of McPhee's music and creative influence on other composers been recognized.

Alex Pauk Conductor

As a conductor and composer, Alex Pauk has been a leading exponent of new music in Canada since graduating from the University of Toronto in

1971. After graduation, he participated in the Ontario Arts Council Conductor's Workshop for two years and then continued his studies in Europe and Japan, at Tokyo's Toho Gakuen School of Music.

In the early 1970s, Pauk settled in Vancouver and in 1975 was named Vancouver's Musician of the Year. Before moving to Vancouver, he helped establish Toronto's ArrayMusic and was its first conductor, and in Vancouver helped establish another new music group, Days Months and Years to Come, for which he was Music Director and Conductor until 1979. Pauk returned to Toronto in 1980 and in 1983 founded Esprit Orchestra.

In his role as Esprit's Music Director, Pauk is committed to the development of a Canadian musical literature. This commitment has led to Esprit's commissioning of over fifty new works by Canadian composers. Along with his careful attention to programming, Pauk's work involves a strong role in the development of Toward a Living Art, Esprit's successful education and audience development programme.

Pauk was Co-Chair for the 1984 ISCM World Music Days, held in Toronto and Montreal. In 1986 he was Music Director and Conductor of the Satori Festival of New Music in Winnipeg, and most recently he was Music Director for R. Murray Schafer's *The Princess of the Stars*, performed on Wildcat Lake in the Haliburton Forest and Wildlife Reserve.

As a composer, Pauk has written over thirty five concert works and has received commissions from CBC Radio, New Music Concerts, Vancouver New Music Society, The Quebec Symphony Orchestra, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Indian dancer and choreographer Menaka Thakkar, harpist Erica Goodman, the Hannaford Street Silver Band and others. He has also composed for film, television, radio and music theatre.

Esprit Orchestra

Esprit is Canada's only full-sized orchestra uniquely devoted to commissioning and performing contemporary orchestral music by Canadian composers. Founded in 1983 by Esprit's Music Director Alex Pauk, Esprit commissions new works each year for premiere along with other new Canadian works commissioned by leading Canadian ensembles and soloists. Dedicated as well to setting Canadian music within an international context, Esprit has performed the Canadian premieres of works by such leading international composers as Luciano Berio, John Adams and Alfred Schnittke.

Esprit presents an annual subscription series in Toronto and has performed several special concerts produced by CBC Radio, the Art Gallery of Ontario and others. Esprit's concerts can be heard on CBC Radio One and Radio Two and in several films by Canada's internationally-acclaimed Rhombus Media Inc. Esprit has been widely recognized for its outstanding performances and its unique role developing a repertoire of Canadian concert music. In 1995, for example, Esprit received the Jean A. Chalmers National Music Award for outstanding contribution to musical creativity.

In November 1997, Esprit released its fourth compact disc in CBC Records' SM5000 series- *Tabuh-Tabuhan: Music of/Musique de Colin McPhee*. The disc was nominated for two 1998 JUNO Awards including Best Large Ensemble.

PROGRAMME NOTES

Symphonie minute

José Evangelista (1994)

This short work in four contrasting movements reproduces, in miniature, the form of a symphony. The music is mostly nervous and light, and the tempo rapid. The piece is thus in contrast to the majority of symphonies in the repertoire -- which is predominated by works of grand proportions in duration, instrumentation, and powerful expression.

The first movement, *Envol*, is built around a very rapid theme suggesting the flight of a bird. The second, *Mélopée*, features a melismatic melody of an improvisational character, climbing in register and intensity. *Combat* is a very rhythmic piece interspersed with short rests. And finally, *Presto chromatique* is made up of lines rapidly ascending and descending. *Symphonie minute* is dedicated to my children.

- José Evangelista

The night is shattered and the blue stars shiver in the distance

Alexina Louie (1997)

The night is shattered and the blue stars shiver in the distance incorporates many of the elements that have evolved in my music over the years: outwardly, the inspiration of the heavens and the stars, which fill me with a sense of mystery, wonder and awe, and inwardly, the seeking of a personal truth through the expressive power of my music.

Commissioned by the National Arts Centre and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, my composition is inspired by a line of poetry by Pablo Neruda which eventually became the title of my piece. The suggestiveness of the words "shivering" and "shattered" led me to explore instrumental effects which are intended to conjure up sensuous, haunting feelings in the listener.

The most prominent aspect of this work is the exploration of fields of orchestral colour and texture. From the outset, sleigh bells underpin a series of expanding chord clusters which, like other chord clusters in the work, grow out of a single pitch into an orchestral colour field.

At other times, a large full chord will dissolve into a single unison note. The pointillistic, fast-moving second section marked "scintillante, leggiero" (sparkling, light) with its short trills, repeated notes and short running figures, is transformed into a broader, more darkly agitated texture of repeated notes. In the next section, this repetitive element begins in the lowest strings (pizzicato), gradually incorporating other instruments as it moves upward through the orchestral palette before it finally culminates in the high register with only the flute and piccolo.

Out of a great crash in the full orchestra, large expansive chords lead into the quiet middle section which focuses on primitive and sensual flutterings and bendings in the flute and alto flute over a background of string glissandi. The haunting sounds of a bowed vibraphone, water gong, bass drum and temple bowls are heard throughout this section.

Altered elements from earlier parts of the composition return in the following section, including the final "expanding" chord from the beginning of the piece, a unison "C" which appears out of a large, dramatic, repeatedly hammered out dissolving chord cluster, as well as glissandi in the full string section. Striking percussion elements reappear as the piece ends with a mysterious effect in the upper stings (quiet scurrying as high as possible ending in short, quick, rising glissandi). Beneath this luminous texture, tremulous flutes make a final statement as the piece ends in the shimmer of a sizzle cymbal fading into nothingness.

– Alexina Louie

Zefiro torna

John Rea (1994)

Zefiro torna is dedicated by the composer to Mario Bertoncini, inventor, pianist and composer of aeolian music. The work was commissioned by

Esprit Orchestra, with financial support from The Canada Council, and was premiered by Esprit in December, 1994. At the time, John Rea wrote this about the work:

Sometimes the wind operates in magical, sometimes in terrifying ways, be it the storms at sea and on land. . . or in the adaptive geometry of a musical composition performed for the first time in an elegant drawing-room or aristocratic Kammermusiksaal. But the most mysterious place for the wind to work its wonders is in the human heart, for storms are located here as well.

The title of my composition makes reference to the sonnet of the same name written by Francesco Petrarca (his first on the death of his beloved Laura) and set almost three hundred years later as a five-voice madrigal by Claudio Montverdi:

Zefiro torna e 'l bel tempo rimena
E i fiori e l'herbe, sua dolce famiglia,
E garir Progne e piagner Filomena,
E Primavera candida e vermiglia.

Ridono i prati e 'l ciel si rasserena,
Giove s'allegra di mirar sua giglia,
L'aria e l'acqua e la terra è d'amor piena,
Ogni anical d'amar si racconsiglia.

Ma per me, lasso, tornano i più gravi
Sospiri che dal cor profondo tragge
Quella ch'al Ciel se ne protò le chiavi;

E cantar augelletti, e fiorir piagge,
E 'n belle donne honeste atti soavi
sono un deserto e fere aspre e selvaggie.

Zephyr returns and brings back beautiful days
and flowers and grass, his sweet companions,
and warbling swallows, lamenting nightingales,
and Spring, milk white and scarlet.

The meadows smile, the sky is blue again,
Jupiter regards his daughter with delight,
earth, air and water are filled with love,

and every animal renews its courtship.

But for me, alas, the heaviest sighs
return, drawn from the depths of my heart
by the one who took its key with her to heaven;

and birdsong, and the flowers of the field,
and the sweet sincerity of lovely women
are as a desert and pitiless wild beasts.

Monteverdi's music becomes for me a kind of cantus firmus which, during the course of its journey through my composition, engages in a dialogue with other musics, with other ancient winds of a more ominous nature, finally to emerge just at that moment when the gentle and agreeable wind Zephyr returns. . . again.

– John Rea

Colin McPhee

Nocturne (1958)

Nocturne, a small and delicate work of great subtlety, shows that Colin McPhee, contrary to his own belief, did indeed find a style of his own. The work, an example of the composer's more mature writing, makes subtle use of Balinese musical material and composed motifs, melodies and rhythms. It transforms the chime-like gamelan keyed instruments and gongs into a Western orchestral setting and uses a variety of flute and woodwind melodies borrowed from Balinese music.

Nocturne was commissioned in the United States by the Contemporary Music Society and was first performed in New York in 1958 under the direction of Leopold Stokowski in an "East meets West" concert of music. Carol Oja, in her 1990 critical biography of McPhee's life and music (Colin McPhee: Composer in Two Worlds), describes Nocturne as a "luxuriant piece, with the shimmering energy of the gamelan transformed into a profound personal statement." The exotic rhythms and melodies call to mind the fascinating nature of Asia, though the clear and effective orchestration is lodged in the continuing traditions of Western music. This juxtaposition of two distinct musical geographies places McPhee, in Oja's words, "among those open-minded explorers who have attempted to distill a new essence from global interconnections."

Esprit Orchestra
Alex Pauk Music Director and Conductor

violin I

Fujiko Imajishi (concertmaster)
Anne Armstrong
Sonia Vizante-Busca
Ronald Mah
Adele Pierre
Parmela Attariwala

clarinet

Max Christie
Richard Thomson

bassoon

Jerry Robinson
William Cannaway

violin II

James Aylesworth
Maya De Forest
Louise Pauls
Sandra Barons
Nicole Zarry
Marianne Urke-Rapson

horn

Gary Pattison
Deborah Stroh

trumpet

Stuart Laughton
Raymond Tizzard

viola

Valerie Kuinka
Angela Rudden
Rhyll Peel
Katharine Rapoport

trombone

Robert Ferguson
David Archer

percussion

Blair Mackay
Trevor Tureski

cello

Paul Widner
Elaine Thompson
Maurizio Baccante
Roman Borys

piano

Andrew Burashko

bass

Tom Hazlitt
Robert Speer

harp

Erica Goodman

flute

Douglas Stewart
Maria Pelletier

oboe

Clare Scholtz
Karen Rotenberg

esprit orchestra
Alex Pauk music director and conductor

Western Canada Tour '98
Calgary – Vancouver – Banff – Edmonton

Hear Esprit perform live again at The Banff Centre this Friday June 19. Joining Esprit as soloist is violist Rivka Golani, performing R. Murray Schafer's 1997 Concerto for Viola and Orchestra, written especially for Esprit and Ms. Golani.

The Banff Centre for the Arts
Rolston Recital Hall
Friday June 19
8:00 p.m.

guest artist Rivka Golani


R. Murray Schafer (Canada)	Concerto for Viola and Orchestra (1997)
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José Evangelista (Canada)	Symphonie minute (1994)
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Esprit's performance in Banff is presented as part of The Banff Centre's Art of the Ensemble series taking place June to August. Featured with Esprit on June 19 are leading ensembles from Europe and North America.

Tickets \$12; \$8 student/senior

For tickets or information please contact The Banff Centre box office at (403) 762-6301 or toll-free at 1 (800) 413-8368. Tickets are also available through any TicketMaster outlet.



SOCAN Foundation congratulates young composers

For the seventh consecutive year, The SOCAN Foundation has awarded cash prizes to composers who are under the age of 30. The winners are:

Sir Ernest MacMillan Awards

works for at least 13 performers:

Heather Schmidt

Eric Marty

Serge Garant Awards

works for 3 to 12 performers:

Brian Current

Karim Al-Zand

Keiko Yamanaka

Pierre Mercure Awards

solo or duet compositions:

Michel Frigon

Brian Jagger

Hugh Le Caine Awards

electroacoustic works:

Louis Dufort

Sara Bannerman

Jean-François Laporte

Godfrey Ridout Awards

choral compositions:

Peter Koene

Bruce Sled

Brochures for the next competition will be available early in 1998.



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